

WHAT is a Talk Trigger?

- A built-in differentiator that creates customer conversations.

WHY should we care about Talk Triggers?

- Word of mouth remains the most effective method of marketing, yet very few businesses have a strategy in place to create and drive it.
- Humans trust other humans, not advertising messages.
- A single word or mouth conversation by a new customer leads to an almost \$200 increase in restaurant sales (p. 5)

Clarifying what a Talk Trigger is NOT.

- It is not a unique selling proposition. A **USP** is a feature, articulated with a bullet point, that is discussed in a conference room VS. a **Talk Trigger** is a benefit, articulated with a story, that is discussed at a cocktail party. (p. 7)
- Example: Quality food and good service are no longer unique enough to sustain word of mouth marketing. Different is better.
- It is not social media marketing nor has social media replaced word of mouth.

Word of Warning

- Customer experience continues to be the #1 differentiator between you and your competition. That needs to be in order before you go all-in to create a talk trigger.

The Four Criteria for Effective Talk Triggers

1. Must be Remarkable: avoid the temptation to compete in your industry by conforming. Instead strive to be uncommon and extraordinary. Same is lame. Don't be afraid of skeptics.
 - i. **EXAMPLES**: Umpqua Bank's silver telephone and Lockbusters' published pricing and pet donations
2. Must be Relevant: avoid trendy gimmicks and strive to create a talk trigger that supports your core business. It has to make sense.
 - i. **EXAMPLES**: Holiday World's free soft drinks and Freshbooks' dinner clubs.
3. Must be Reasonable: avoid over-promising because that has been shown to depress participation and diminish brand trust; balance between big enough to get noticed yet small enough to be trusted.
 - i. **EXAMPLES**: Graduate Hotel's keys and Five Guys' excessive fries
4. Must be Repeatable: avoid temptation to "surprise and delight"; a talk trigger should be offered to every customer, every time.
 - i. **EXAMPLES**: Penn & Teller meet and greet and box of sardines in Portuguese restaurant

ACTION STEP: Create a list of five possible talk triggers for your business and run them through the four criteria listed above.